133 are bordered with hills. Nevertheless, it may be said that Mossi country is flat. It is covered with the classic bush of the Sudan with its small shrubs and tall grass interspersed with bastard mahogany, /7/ [137] huge trunks of the baobabs, and tamarind and silk-cotton trees, thicker on the banks of the Volta rivers, thinner around the villages.

24 262 The country is quite fertile and easily provides for its inhabitants. The various kinds of millet grow well, especially the small white variety (Pennisetum spicatum) which, mashed and boiled, is the staple of the diet and sorghum, or large red millet, which is used to prepare the famous beer of the country. The horses eat the latter kind, although they prefer the large white millet. Around the huts maize grows well in soil fertilized by the daily accumulation of waste. It is a welcome source of grain when the millet reserves of the previous year are running low and the current harvest has not yet matured. Maize fields are surrounded with a double row of sorghum and often [283] with a double row of a fiber plant called bérensé, a sort of hemp which the natives use to make ropes. After the maize has been harvested, the field is planted with previously prepared tobacco seedlings. Finally, the sunken areas created when huts are built, as well as all slightly damp places, are planted with gombo, okra, which is highly valued as a sauce ingredient.

[311] During the rainy season no piece of land remains unused around the villages, and when the red millet ripens and the ears join across the path, passage becomes difficult. Even the hut roofs bear all kinds [415] of calabash plants. These supply the housewives with gourds that fulfill the purposes served by our plates, dishes, glasses, and basins; the travellers with their flasks; the snuff-takers with their boxes; and the sorcerers with their spirit-calling instruments. The large gourds that are used to make drums grow among the shoots of maize. In the marshes near the watercourses where water lies stagnant, rice fields are planted, but rice is a luxury food, hard to cultivate because of [554] the care it requires. The natives use it only on feast days or when they wish to honor a distinguished guest. Cotton is sown in damp places among the stalks of large red millet, and it is harvested much later. Peanuts and peas also take up part of the cultivated land, while beans creep along the ground between the shoots of small millet. Peppers, sesame, the indigo plant, yams, manioc, sweet potatoes, and a small

tuber, Coleus coffini, which Europeans call oussounifing or fabirama, and which may replace potatoes in a pinch, are cultivated in the soils most propitious to them.

The precious karite /shea/ tree (Butyrospermum parkii) grows in most fields; its fruit, prized for its cool and slightly sweet flesh, contains a pit which yields karite butter, the fat most widely used in cooking and to make soap. Around the villages, and sometimes even within them, the néré /locust bean/ tree (Parkia africana) produces elongated pods; its bark, mashed in water, yields a paste that is used to harden the floors of the huts. Its flour makes a cooling drink when mixed in water, and it may also be eaten; its seeds /8/ are used to make kalro /kalre in the original/, the soumbara of the Bambara, an ingredient /made from locust beans, néré/ of all carefully prepared sauces. The doubalé and silk-cotton or kapokiero trees spread their shade over the weavers, numerous among the Mossi, and over the talkers who are even more. Bamboo grows well in the damp southern regions, and the palm oil tree is occasionally found. The caoutchouc liana, however, has not yet been introduced.

Small chickens run in all directions through the villages, along with domesticated guinea hens. Everywhere in the bush near the huts, little boys herd goats and sheep; this is the task of youngsters here at the age when their contemporaries among us /in France/ begin to learn the alphabet. The most common sheep and goats are small in size. The sheep have short hair. Sometimes, especially in the larger villages where markets are held, goats and sheep are to be seen with long legs and long, curled horns. They are imported from the northeast and fattened to be sold as butcher's meat. The height of fashion for the wife or a prosperous naba is to be followed by a Touareg /Tuareg/ sheep, well washed and very white. It is fed on millet leftovers and bean mush, and its mistress often presents it with a bit of salt to lick. In short, it is well cared for and agreeably fat; on some important feast day, it will embellish the menu.

The huts are usually guarded by very commonplace dogs, often ill-tempered, but cowardly. A stick is enough to drive them away. They are mostly used in the hunt, the great Mossi pastime during the dry season. Domesticated ducks are sometimes found in nabas' households, as well as pigeons, but these birds are not widespread and not within the reach of everyone. Finally, almost every group of huts has cats which belong to the women and which are difficult

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Above: A Baobab.
Below: Mossi Village.

244 /476/ André Rançon (Dans la Haute-Gambie /In the Upper
137 Gambia/ 1895) describes it in detail as follows:

"The Bambara and Sarracolé /Soninke/ call it diabéré, the Malinké diabéro, and the Peuhl oussoudié. It is a magnificent aroid of the Arum genus. It grows chiefly in damp places sheltered from the sun, and it favors soil which is rich in humus. This is why the lougan /frameworks/ for diabéré are always located in the shade of large trees where the ground is cooler, sheltered from the sun, and richer in humus because of the mold formed by the rotting leaves. It is a hardy plant, and its underground stem consists of a tubercle. The leaves have long petioles and may be as high as 2 meters. They are strongly ensheathed at the base, peltate, and the broad part of the leaf is sometimes of enormous size. They exhibit at the lower edge a rather deep indentation which runs up to a few centimeters from the spot where the stem radiates into three main nerves. These three are larger than the others and easy to recognize for they are quite obvious. From them radiate secondary nerves which also stand out strongly.

"These leaves are very thick. The three main nerves are never absent. The secondary nerves vary in number according to the age of the plant, and especially the size of the leaves. The secondary nerves radiate in turn into a large number of filaments which are quite easy to recognize and which crisscross the parenchyma of the leaf and reach the edges almost in a straight line. The upper face of the leaf is of a vivid dark green and somewhat velvety. Finally, the petioles are greenish brown at the base and a tender green at the top.

"The flowers are unisexual, clustered on a single spadix, with the females at the base and the males above, and without a perianth. They are surrounded by a spathe which is rather closed, rolled up like a horn, and of a slightly yellowish white. The fruit is a globular berry, unilocular, and containing from two to eight /477/ seeds. I dedicate this new plant to Professor Heckel and name it Arum heckeli.

"The root is a tubercle, about the thickness of a fist, blackish brown, and somewhat like a slightly elongated onion in shape. When the plant ripens, about twelve or fifteen turions grow on this tubercle, the largest of them the size of an egg at most. They make up the edible part, which is also used for reproduction. Their shape is the

244 same as that of the tubercle, to which they adhere strongly. Their
137 color is also the same. The flesh of these turions is white, highly aqueous, and compact. It recalls that of the potato, or rather that of the sweet potato. The odor is slightly noxious.

248 "The diabéré are sown in June and July. It is sufficient to place the turions in a hole dug into the ground to a depth of 10 or 15 centimeters. The harvesting is done in December. Around the end of October or beginning of November, the inhabitants of the Sandougou (Upper Gambia) are in the habit of cutting the leaves to a height of about 10 centimeters from the ground, in order to make the turions grow bigger.

252 "The diabéré is not a vegetable to be scorned even by the delicate palate of the Europeans. When boiled or fried in the pan, it makes a dish of pleasant taste. I recall eating it with pleasure in a mutton stew. The natives prefer it boiled, and in certain areas, for example the Diaka, Sandougou, and Tenda, they eat it in large quantities. In the latter region especially it is consumed intensively, and the natives of neighboring territories attribute the [164] skin disease and numerous goiters of the Tenda inhabitants to their over-indulgence in this food." (Pages 83 to 85.)

246 The Mossi also cultivate karyanga or kamyanga. "This gramineous plant," says the Cahier des rapports /Production Report) of the Ouagadougou circle, "grows wild along watercourses, but the natives also cultivate it around the edges of their millet fields. The stalk, hairy and rough, reaches a /478/ height of 0.80 meter when full grown. It expands into a sheaf near the tip. The leaves, about 3 centimeters wide, are shaped like very elongated spearheads. When still green, they are severed about 20 centimeters from the ground. Then they are left to dry in the sun and stored for consumption during the dry season. The karyanga serves as fodder for livestock and horses. This plant is quite widespread in the eastern and southeastern parts of Mossi territory (Béloussa and Tenkodogo)."

As we can see, karyanga is a grass that grows in the bush along watercourses and that is cut down and fed to horses. Some horse owners cut it down and replant it in their maize field. In the

224 435 At Kombisiguiri, as we have just seen, there are 10 elephant hunters out of about 70 chiefs of compounds. Among the latter there are also some 20 men who hunt other animals, but they are cultivators who hunt on the side. They seek buffalo. When they kill one, they sell the meat to the village that stands nearest to the spot of the kill for 35,000 cowries. They also hunt the koba antelope, whose meat is worth from 20,000 cowries, the striped deer worth 6,500, the pig deer worth 5,000, the wart hog worth 10,000. They also hunt hares, bustards, guinea fowl, partridges, turtle-doves, etc.

224 262 The Mossi do not hunt monkeys and do not eat them. /495/ Actually, there are very few in Mossi territory, except for the red-haired monkeys who are great lovers of millet and maize.

224 825 778 The Mossi do not hunt crocodiles because the latter are held sacred. If one were to kill a crocodile, one would become ill, one's head would swell and one's teeth would fall out. Snakes, on the other hand, are killed and eaten, but in Mossi territory proper there are few large ones (pythons, boas) because the climate is not sufficiently humid. They are more numerous in Boussansé and Gourounsi lands.

226 Fishing is less important than hunting among the Mossi, for the simple reason that the land, with its low rainfall, only has muddy ponds during the dry season (on this subject, see our Introduction /not translated/). Thus, not only do the Mossi lack professional fishermen, but the villages do not even undertake collective fishing during the dry season (with the exception of some southern localities, in Kombisiguiri for example). Only children attempt to catch the mudfish which are always present in large quantities in small ponds, even when they are nearly dry.

222 Gathering, on the other hand, plays the same role among the Mossi as among the other Sudanese Blacks, and we shall study it here in some detail, since we have only described it in broad outline so far.

222 137 The tree most widespread throughout Mossi territory, and which grows wild, is the karité. Its leaves are a pleasant green, and it is somewhat similar to our Normandy apple tree. Its bark is whitish and made of small juxtaposed quadrilaterals. It is the karité which

222 predominates in the bush of the territory and which, owing to its
137 abundance, lends the bush its particular character.

The karité fruit is an egg-shaped, elongated chestnut, smaller than the fruit of the European chestnut tree. It is distinguished from it even more clearly by its fleshy covering with its greenish skin. This flesh is soft, quite thick, and tastes delicious, like a very ripe, even overripe pear.

222 It is the women who gather the karité when the fruit is ripe,
252 before the rainy season, at the beginning of April. First, the flesh surrounding the chestnut is eaten /496/. Then, after breaking the brown shell, the inner part is used to make the famous karité butter.

252 As everywhere else, it is the women who do this among the Mossi. They remove the shell of the chestnut, and then mash the sticky and whitish substance which is found inside. It is pounded on crushing stones with a little wooden pestle. Once this is done, the substance is cooked in a canari and then mashed again, this time in the large wooden mortars, until the paste acquires the consistency of butter. Then it is pounded once more between crushing stones. When this is over, the paste is placed in a canari with lukewarm water, and then stirred and manipulated by hand. This produces a sort of dirty-white cream, somewhat similar to beaten egg whites, but firmer. Then this cream is boiled until it changes into oil. The impurities drop to the bottom of the canari, and the oil floats. The latter is gathered, placed in a clean gourd, and allowed to cool. The result is a pale yellow butter. At first sight it looks like real butter, but when sniffed it reveals a characteristic odor which is unpleasant to Europeans.

Gourounsi women prepare karité butter in the same manner as Mossi women.

302 This butter is put to various uses. First of all, it is utilized for grooming purposes. The women especially rub it into their hair in copious quantities, not only among the Mossi but throughout the Sudan as well. This, naturally enough, lends them an aroma which
[388] is not very pleasant to European noses. Karité butter is also made into soap when certain ashes are added. Finally, it is used in cooking.

423 The karité trees standing in a field belong to the owner of the field. Those which stand in the bush belong to the people of the

423 village in whose territory the bush is located. They belong to all the people of the village, for Mossi chiefs have not set those trees aside for themselves as they did with the néré trees.

222 137 The néré are found in large numbers in Mossi territory, although they are far less numerous than the karité, which literally fill the bush. The ratio must be something like one /497/ néré for every fifteen karité. The néré is nevertheless far from rare, and sometimes ten or fifteen are to be found together, standing not far apart. The néré is easily distinguished by its branches which expand in a fanlike arrangement from a short but elegant trunk. The branches spread out very prettily, in triangular fashion, so the néré blossoms out like a shower of fireworks. Its leaves are no less characteristic than its shape. They are of a dark, oxydized green which contrasts with the superb brilliant green of the karité. The néré leaves are similar to those of the acacia.

The néré is called roga or goaga, doga or doaga in Mossi. It is called soungou in Nounouma and Kassouna, sôla in Sissala. The Nankana call it roga or doga like the Mossi.

The fruits of the néré are long brown pods that grow in clusters on the tree and that contain a yellow substance, sweet to the taste, packed around a sort of very elongated pit. The women gather these 222 423 fruits approximately from March 15 to April 15. The neré trees standing in a field belong to the owner of the field, but the Mossi village chiefs claim ownership to those that stand in the uncultivated bush.

Among the Gourounsi, as we know, the néré that stand in a field, even if the latter is not being cultivated at the moment, belong to the owner of the field, while those that stand in the uncultivated bush surrounding the village belong to all the people of the village.

This points up the difference between a centralized kingdom where the authority of the chiefs is strong, and small independent cantons or villages where it is not.

252 261 Néré is put to many uses. First of all, the yellow meal, including the more solid central part that runs from one end of the pod to the other like a pit, is mashed by the women in millet mortars or in wooden gourds. Once mashed, it is thinned with

222 Let us now proceed to the baobab.
137 It is called touéra or touéga in Mossi (sira or izira in Bambara). It is to be found most everywhere in the Mossi bush, and especially in rocky, hilly spots near large streams.

The fruit of the baobab is gathered from December to April. It is a sort of huge green almond hanging from a stem that often
252 reaches 25 or 30 centimeters in length. One breaks the shell, removes the flesh, and mashes it in the mortar (this, of course, is done by the women). Once this is done, the resulting meal is strained through a straw strainer. It is now ready to eat.

This is called toïdésoum in Mossi, tiondé-boé in Peuhl, siramogou in Mandé (from sira, "baobab" and mogou, "flour").
[438] Colloquially, Europeans call it "monkey bread." It is sold on Mossi markets as on the markets of Bambara country.

To prepare it for consumption, this meal is thinned with milk, or water if there is no milk, or else mixed with millet flour. The latter mixture is called sangaré ni siramogou in Bambara ("millet flour and baobab flour"). The meal may also be mixed with néré flour.

It is not only the fruit of the baobab, however, that is utilized. The fresh green leaves are used as a sauce ingredient. The dried leaves are used to make tonéra (lalo in Foutanké /Futajalonke?/, namourou or namougou in Bambara, oro in Peuhl). The leaves are dried and crushed in a mortar to make a powder that is added to sauce.

283 Finally, let us add that the bark of the baobab is used to make rope.

222 After the karité, néré, and baobab, we must list the tamarind
137 tree (Tamarindus indica), koussouga or poussouga in Mossi, n'tomi in Bambara.

222 The fruit of the tamarind is a pod, longer than a finger /500/
137 and about the same thickness, that ripens between January and April.
263 It is a yellow-green brown. When cut along its length, it is found to contain some ten little round fruits, the size of half a hazelnut, lying in a row within the greenish pulp. Only the dried pod is used, after removing the little fruits which have a rather pleasing taste when fresh, something between the kola nut and the hazelnut. When the pod is dry, however, the fruits are also dried out and hard, and they are discarded.

272 These pods, of course, are not eaten. They merely serve to
263 make the tô sauce fresh and sour, as the Blacks like it.

[261] The pods[3] themselves are only eaten in times of famine, because they give colic. In addition, they harm the mouth, tongue, and teeth (gingivitis).

In ordinary times, the natives use them medically as a fever remedy. They boil them with pimento and drink the decoction. This is done by the Mossi as well as by the Gourounsi, Bambara, etc.

Tamarind pods are also made into dry balls which are sold at market. They are crudely mashed with a pestle, and then pressed together in cold water into balls of varying size. Whenever one wishes to give the to a tamarind taste, one pries loose a small piece of the ball with a knife and places it in the canari of boiling water where millet flour will be added.

278 Like the Bambara, the Mossi prepare a purging drink with the
757 tamarind pod, either fresh or dried. It is boiled in water, a tiny bit of millet flour is added, and the drink is consumed when slightly warm. This decoction has laxative properties. The Haoussa are also familiar with it, but the Gourounsi are not.

222 To summarize, the tamarind pod has two chief uses among the
●137 Mossi and other Blacks of West Africa. It serves to sour and freshen the tô, and it also serves as a purgative.

222 Let us add that Dr. Rançon, in the account of his /501/ trip through Upper Gambia, described the preparation of a tamarind drink for European consumption. The pod is left to dissolve in cold water for three hours, sugar is added, and a sort of lemonade results.

222 The Mossi have rônier in every village. This, as we know, is a
137 variety of palm tree.

"It is the largest palm tree, Borassus flabelliformis," says Dr. Rançon (Dans la Haute-Gambie, pages 139 to 141). "It is easy to recognize owing to its height and characteristic appearance. Its trunk is very long and may sometimes reach 25 or 30 meters. It is swollen in the middle, and its lower and upper parts are much less thick, much more slender. The bark is blackish and bears scars of the wounds left by fallen leaves. The wood, although it looks spongy, is quite tough and hard to dent with a saw. Rônier logs are heavier than water. This is one of the rare woods that do not float. The leaves of a grown rônier are clustered in a thick bunch at the

[3] [i.e. tamarind pods — Analyst]

222 top of the trunk, and they are deeply indented. The trunk never
● 137 bears leaves except when it is young. The dark green of the leaves and their toughness makes /sic/ them look from afar like the artificial zinc leaves of some theatrical backdrops or weather vanes. The youngest leaves at the top are strongly imbricated and ensheathed, and ivory white in color. They are very tender and yield palm cabbage. The leaves of the rônier only fall off when completely dry.

"The fruits, which are called rône, come in clusters of about forty or fifty. They are the size of a medium-sized melon and very heavy. Their covering is green when they are young, orange-yellow when they are ripe. The large seeds, which are blackish and disc-shaped, or like spheres flattened at the poles, are surrounded with a fibrous, gold-yellow meat which is very watery and very fragrant. [261] Its taste is pleasant, although slightly tinged with turpentine. The natives eat large quantities of it, especially in times of scarcity.

313 "Rônier wood is dense, long lasting, and remarkably tough.
137 502/ Immune to insects and humidity, it is excellently suited to the manufacture of piles, and often used in the construction of bridges and wharves. The male trees alone are used. The female trees can only be used for fencing, for they are hollow and lacking in strength....

222 "In addition to the fruit, the Blacks also eat the roots of the
137 young shoots, the taste of which is slightly astringent and rather un-
262 pleasant. They are eaten raw. The terminal buds of the palms are very tender. They are palm cabbages, less tasty to be sure than those of Oreodoxa oleracea, but nevertheless deserving of recognition. When cut into small pieces 2 centimeters square and well seasoned with oil, vinegar, salt and pepper, they make a very good salad, especially if they were previously soaked for twenty-four hours. This dish is highly prized by Europeans who live in the Sudan. Finally, [263] the rônier yields a fairly abundant sap from which sugar might be 273 extracted. When fermented, it produces a palm wine of inferior quality."

137 It must be added that the fibers of the rônier leaves are also
[285] utilized. The West African Blacks use them to make baskets (as for example in Mossi territory) or cords (as for instance in Upper Gambia).

137 They are 7 or 8 meters tall, 10 meters at most, and their huge fruits are bunched in clusters of five or six rather than forty or fifty.

137 There are no rônier in the Mossi bush itself, but there are some in every Mossi village. They originated from seeds tossed at random 222 after eating the fruits, or from an ancient cultivation of the tree. The rônier, therefore, is not a natural product of Mossi territory and should not, in all exactitude, be listed among the gathering crops. On the other hand, can it be listed with the cultivated crops at the present day, and can we call cultivation the act of tossing seeds to the ground in order to get rid of them? No matter what the truth may be, the Mossi eat /503/ the fruits of their rônier but do not extract any palm wine. As we have just said, they use the fibers of the leaves for their wickerwork.

137 While the rônier occur in Mossi territory, there are, on the other hand, no palm-oil trees and palmier-ban /?/. Those begin to appear only in Gourounsi territory, to the south of the Mossi.

222 137 We have just reviewed the most important gathering trees in the area, but the Mossi bush contains many others, less important to be sure but nevertheless useful, which we shall now mention.

First, there is the ganra or ganga (sounsoun in Mandé, diomba in Peuhl and Sarakolé). This is the medlar tree of West Africa. In appearance, it is a big tree similar to the karité but even bigger, with a thicker and more powerful trunk.

The fruit is a medlar, smaller than the European one. When green, it has the same acrid taste and numbs the mouth. When ripe, it is such as we eat it in Europe. The natives begin to eat it during the rainy season and consume it until January.

386 171 The wives of Bambara blacksmiths make a varnish for pots and canari with the bark of the sounsoun. As for the wives of Mossi blacksmiths, they prefer to use for this purpose the bark of two trees we shall mention later, the nobora and the sibi. In Gourounsi territory, on the other hand, the women who make pottery pluck the medlars while still green and crush them. They add water, thus making a sort of varnish which they use on the canari after they are fired. The ganra is called kano in Nounouma, kakano in Kassouna, kalo in Sissala, and ganra or ganga in Nankana and Mossi.

325 Let us add that among the Mossi, as in all of West Africa, the ganra tree is closely related to fetishistic superstitions, and will be mentioned again in a later chapter on religion.

222 Now for the kankanga (plural kankansé; the Bambara and Malinké
● 137 call it n'toro, the Foulbé guip-bi, and the Nounouma /504/ kaporo). The kankanga is the native fig tree of West Africa. Its fruits are none other than figs, not as good to be sure as those eaten in Europe, but figs nevertheless. The Mossi, as well as the Gourounsi, Bambara, etc., usually eat these figs as they are. There are ripe ones to be found at all times of the year, and one plucks them at will.
259 In times of famine, instead of eating them in this fashion, one al-
261 lows them to dry in the sun and then mashes them on crushing stones (among the Mossi) or in small mortars (among the Bambara). They are thus made into a sort of meal which is boiled and which serves as a substitute for millet flour. At such times the Mossi also eat the leaves of the kankanga. They cook them in boiling water and add salt.

252 As for the Gourounsi, sometimes they eat the figs fresh, and sometimes they prepare them for their sauces. In the latter case they boil them, cut them to pieces, and dry them in the sun. When the pieces are quite dry they are laid aside, and whenever needed one of them is mashed, reduced to powder, and added to the sauce.

222 Now for nobora or noboga (n'kouna in Mandé, kountan in
137 Khassonké /Kasonke/, hèdè in Foulbé and Toucouleur, kounguié in Sarakolé, salo in Nounouma, kansalo in Kassouna).

The nobora is a kind of wild plum tree. Its fruits ripen from the time when millet is sown until the time when it reaches a height of 80 centimeters, that is to say, between May and July.

273 The fruits of the n'kouna are either eaten fresh or made into a sort of drink called noborame in Mossi, n'kounangui in Mandé, n'diam hèdam in Foulbé. In all three tongues, this means "nobora (or n'kouna) water." This drink is known throughout the Sudan.

In order to prepare this drink, the fruits are placed in water after being pricked with a small piece of wood to let the juice run, and they are left there for twelve hours. At the end of this period of time, they are removed and the water is boiled for a /505/ quarter of an hour. Once this is done, one takes some of the residue left at the bottom of the canari in which dolo is made, and puts it in the jar containing n'kounangui. The liquid is allowed to rest for one night. In the morning, the drink is gaseous and ready for consumption. It is not as strong as dolo.

273 The Mossi make n'kounangui, like the Bambara, but the Toucouleur and Foulah do not because they are Moslems. The latter's slaves alone, being fetishists make some. The Gourounsi do not make it either, but this is because n'kouna is scarce in Gourounga country. The Gourounsi claim that this tree keeps hyenas away, and when someone dies in the bush and is buried on the spot, a branch of n'kouna is planted where he was buried. It is said that the hyenas will wander about at a distance, but will never dare come close and dig up the body. The Gourounsi claim that this is a matter of common knowledge.

222 The léla is another kind of wild plum tree. It is called séno in
137 Bambara and Malinké, filina in Nounouma, mia in Kassouna, mellemoila in Sissala. Its plums are tiny. They are yellow before they ripen, and red when completely ripe (March-May). They are no larger than the tip of the finger, and they are eaten as they are. The almond is not eaten. Children sometimes munch on it, but when eaten in large quantities it causes colic.

The sibi, another tree found in the Mossi bush, is called n'pékou in Bambara and Peuhl, bembé in Sarakolé. The Nounouma called it kakian, the Kassouna kakiéno, the Nankana sibi like the Mossi. The fruit is tiny and sometimes causes colic. It ripens during the dry and warm season, and it is eaten as it comes. The
[272] Habé prepare a drink from it which is called diam-n'pékoudian ("n'pékou water") by the local Foulbé and Toucouleur. The Mossi, Gourounsi, and Bambara do not make this drink.

Let us cite also the tiarala (tiaralsé or tiaralésé in the plural, n'ségué in Bambara, saõ in Nounouma). The Mossi are very fond of
[276] the tiarala fruit, which is highly aromatic and which is used /506/ to lend fragrance to native tobacco. They also eat the leaves.

Let us proceed to kara (or kaka). This is the Mandé n'taba. It is the Mandé n'taba. It is called dankola in Nounouma and Sissala, kalankola in Kassonboura.

"The n'taba," says André Rançon (Dans la Haute-Gambie, page 35), "is a malvoidea /?/ of the Sterculiacea family. It is the Sterculia cordifolia Cav., thus named because its leaves are heart-shaped. It is one of the most beautiful plants of tropical African regions. It is easily recognized by its enormous trunk, huge leaves,

222 and very peculiar fruit. The latter, which grows at the tip of
137 young boughs, is shaped like a huge pod whose pulpy valves open when pressure is exercised along the convex ridge. Its free tip is equipped with a sort of pulpy appendage shaped like a thorn, about 0.06 meter in length. When ripe, the fruit is of a distinctive light-red color. It contains a dozen polyhedral seeds immersed in a yellowish flesh which is tasty and highly fragrant. It is one of the best desserts I came across in the Sudan, and we often feasted on it. The fruits are clustered in bunches of three, five, or seven, and strongly fastened to the peduncle and stem that hold them. They rarely fall, and in order to gather them one must break the bough that bears them."

André Rançon adds (page 36) that the n'taba is related to the kola nut. It is apparently a sort of false kola tree.

The n'taba fruits ripen from December to April. The Mossi and Gourounsi eat them when they have dried out on the tree, or
65 else as they come /fresh/, or after boiling them for a quarter of an
435 hour. They are sold on Mossi markets at the price of three for 1 cowrie, six for 2 cowries, etc., that is to say, 150 for 1 sou.

272 These fruits are also used to prepare a drink among the Mossi and Gourounsi. They are boiled, mashed, placed in a canari filter, that is, a canari perforated at the bottom which is placed on top of another canari. Water is poured upon the fruits /507/, becomes permeated with the juice, and passes on to the bottom canari. This drink is sweet and tastes like honey.

222 Let us cite also the kamsoro (n'kodo in Bambara). It is a very
137 big, thickset tree, with characteristic leaves. The latter are very tough, very large, very thick, their shape ovoidal or rather a little more elongated than an egg, and their color a brilliant green.

The fruits of this tree are eaten throughout the year, especially by children, because ripe ones are to be found at all times.

There are no kamsoro in Gourounga territory.

Let us also cite the véda or ouéda, the caoutchouc liana, called n'saba in Mandé, fôgui in Peuhl, fittigné in Sarakolé, which is also called laré and Vahea senegalensis. This liana bears fruits that ripen in March and April. They might best be compared to oranges. They are green before they ripen and orange-yellow when ripe. Rançon claims that they are delicious. These fruits are eaten as they

222 come, and they are not used to prepare any sort of drink.
●137 The n'saba is found almost everywhere in West Africa, but grows scarcer toward the north. It is found in Mossi and Gourounsi territories in very small numbers.

314 The Dagari, who live farther south than the Gourounsi, gather the caoutchouc from the n'saba lianas and make wads with it for the tip of the sticks used to beat their tom-toms. The Gourounsi griot purchase these sticks from the Dagari. The Mossi and Gourounsi do not themselves gather the n'saba caoutchouc.

In the south this liana is used to make cords, but this is not done among the Mossi or Gourounsi.

222 137 261 252 In addition to the plants we have just mentioned and which are utilized at all times, there are others whose products are used almost exclusively in times of famine. Such are the konkouira, sabatouli, silikoré, etc.

The konkouira is a big tree whose Mandé name is n'zéfé. Its leaves are gathered when they are beginning to grow when they are still quite tender. They are mashed in a small mortar with a pestle, and then placed in water for two hours. Then they are worked into balls, with the addition of millet flour. A canari is filled with water and put on the fire /508/, and then twigs are laid across its mouth, parallel to each other, to form a grill on which the konkouira balls are placed. In order to ensure thorough cooking, the balls are covered with an overturned gourd which encloses them and prevents the steam from escaping too rapidly. The balls are steamed in this fashion for one hour, and then they are ready to eat.

These leaves are never eaten straight but always with millet flour, and they really serve to stretch the flour supply. If they were eaten straight, they would cause colic. In any case they cause hiccups (gounsounkouira in Mossi). They are therefore more a food for times of famine.

The silikoré or kalanianga (both are Mossi names) is a small thorny bush that grows around trees and bears very small fruits. The women gather those fruits during the rainy season. They mash them in a small trough and then boil them in a canari. This first water is discarded, and the fruits boiled a second time. Again the water is discarded, and the fruits are washed in cold water. Karité butter and salt are added, and the mixture is eaten. The silikoré are used

222 chiefly in times of famine, but occasionally at other times also.
137 The silikoré fruits are not eaten among the Gourounsi and Bam-
261 bara.
252 Gonsé is called sofarangoni in Bambara. It is a shrub, the height of a man, that yields kéména. The latter is a pod containing small flat beans of a sort, very thin, that ripen at the time of the millet harvest. These /beans/ are boiled twice, and the water is discarded both times. Then they are washed in cold water and boiled again, for the last time, in a canari covered with a straw lid. Once this is done karité butter is added, and the mixture is eaten. Kéména
[435] is sold at market ready made. A handful is worth 5 cowries (1/2 centime). Kéména is also mixed with /true/ beans and either eaten or sold in this fashion.

Lamboye is called béré in Bambara, guidili in Peuhl. It is found almost everywhere in the Sudan. Its fruits, or rather seeds, are eaten only in times of famine. They are round, very /509/ tiny, and they ripen during the dry and warm season. They are gathered, laid out in the sun, and then crushed in a small mortar to break the outer membrane. Once this is done, they are soaked in water for eight days. This water is discarded, and the seeds are washed twice. Then they are boiled, salt is added, and they are eaten. This is done only in times of famine. These seeds are poisonous, as we can see, and would be toxic if they were not submitted to these various processes.

222 Sabatouli (bembé in Bambara and Sôninké) is a tree whose fruits
137 ripen one month after the first rains (that is, in May). The fruit is very tiny, no larger than a grain of maize. One eats it as it comes, when passing by or clearing land in the bush, or else one takes it to the village children. Nothing else is done with it. Sabatouli is found almost everywhere in the Sudan.

Vâka is a tree which is called goumou or goumbou in Bambara. The flowers of this tree, which are red, are used to make sauce when there is no gombo left. It is called fofo in Nounouma and Sissala, kafro in Kassouna. Its fruits are not eaten.

We overlooked the jujube tree above. It is called mourouga in Mossi, n'tomono in Bambara, gouésso in Nounouma and Kassouna. The Mossi eat the fruits only when traveling through the bush. The Gourounsi do not eat them at all.

222 ●137 Let us mention also kankalra (lenga in Mandé), whose leaves are eaten by the Mossi.

We have just reviewed the trees and shrubs whose produce is utilized by the Mossi. We must still say a word about mushrooms, wild roots, and wild fodder.

Mushrooms are called goudou in Mossi, dakon in Nounouma and Kassouna, kon in Sissala. They grow in the Mossi bush during the winter season, as they do in Gourounsi territory and incidentally throughout West Africa, and they are gathered by the women. Two kinds are distinguished, the /510/ termite-nest mushrooms (yaoré-goudou in Mossi, from yaoré, "termite nest," and goûdou, "mushroom") and the mushrooms that grow among refuse. The latter are called niandara-goûdou, meaning "straw mushrooms," because they grow chiefly under old discarded roof thatch. These mushrooms taste better, but those on termite nests are bigger.

252 The Mossi cook mushrooms in karité butter, mash them in the butter, and eat them. They also use them to make a sauce for the sarabout to which body is added with beans, cooked separately and also mashed. The sarabout (Mossi name for tô) is eaten after dipping in the bean-and-mushroom sauce.

Gourounsi women boil the mushrooms and then leave them to dry on the soukala roofs. They take a handful or two a day for their sauces. To this end, they boil the mushrooms again without mashing them and add soumbara and salt. Mushrooms are never served as a separate dish among the Gourounsi.

222 137 Let us proceed to edible roots.

Vidiba is a sort of wild onion called fanto by the Bambara, Sarakolé, and Foulbé.

261 252 The Bambara use vidiba leaves to make sauce, but they do not eat the onion itself because it is poisonous. The Mossi do likewise, except in times of famine. At such times, the onion is rubbed with sand until the black membrane is removed, and then it is copiously washed. Then it is boiled in a canari filled with water to the brim and covered, and the cooking is maintained until all the water has evaporated. Then ashes are gathered, strained, and added to the contents of the gourd. The mixture is stirred with a piece of wood, and then the vidiba is removed, cut to pieces, and eaten.

222 137 261 Séba is a kind of long, poisonous, black turnip which is eaten only in times of famine and after protracted cooking.

Seba and vidiba caused the death of many people during the last Mossi famine by giving them dysentery.

137 231 /511/ As for wild fodder found in Mossi territory, there is first of all kénibédo, that grows in bunches 30 centimeters high in damp hollows. Its leaves are rudimentary. It is severed 20 centimeters from the ground and stored during the dry season.

Then there are the fodder plants belonging to the papilionaceous family, densa and youbenga. The tiny stem of densa or youbenga is not severed from the plant itself, which reaches a height of 0.30 or 0.40 meter in both cases. Horses eat them either green or dry, indiscriminately.

137 314 283 Finally, let us say a word about souga, a sort of wild hemp called thus by the Mossi. The Nounouma call it boupo, and the Kassouna bénédévio. It is found only in certain parts of Mossi territory, but it grows throughout Gourounsi lands. Its bark yields very tough white fibers which the natives use in the manufacture of rope, string or thread for fishing implements. The bark does not keep through the dry season, so it is reduced to fibers during the rainy season. The fibers, on the other hand, can take the most intensive dryness without deteriorating. Souga is not cultivated.

222 433 We are now finished with Mossi gathering activities. They have a certain importance, as we have just seen, the same one on the whole as in other Sudanese populations. They are infinitely less important than cultivation, of course, but only slightly less so than stockbreeding, and they must be placed on the same level as the hunt. They are far more important than fishing or arboriculture.

245 433 The latter deserves no real mention. It hardly exists among the Mossi. It is limited to what we described earlier about the rônier and to the planting, here and there, of a few papaw trees.

433 In short, cultivation comes first, with stockbreeding trailing far behind, then gathering and hunting on the same level, then fishing and finally arboriculture.

090 /512/ Industries flourish among the Mossi. We shall review one by one, in detail, the various trades they exercise.

11: Skinner E-5 (1955-1957) 1964
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all year round. The Red and White Voltas are important only as drainage systems during the short rainy period, for they dwindle to a string of small stagnant pools in the dry season. In some low-lying areas near the main watercourses, trapped waters provide the moisture for dank riverine vegetation.

The soils of Mossi country, which are typical of the Sudanic and Sahel areas, were formed chiefly by the weathering of Pre-Cambrian rocks. Ferruginous soils of varying depths, red argils, and pure silicates of aluminum predominate in the northern regions. In the south are found thin, sandy soils formed by the decomposition of crystalline rocks and sandstones. Most of these soils are eroded by torrential rains, the scouring action of the harmattan, and the incendiary action of man and nature. Even where the soils are reasonably fertile, the nature of the underlying rocks precludes important deposits of ground water. In the western sandstone region, rain filters down with such rapidity that water can be obtained only from deep wells. In the remainder of the territory, the presence of Pre-Cambrian rocks induces a rapid runoff, with the result that wells yield very little water at any depth. Rainfall collects only in river-bed pools or along dams constructed for that purpose in hollow places. The building of dams was relatively unknown in aboriginal times, and the Mossi did not practice irrigation farming.

During the dry season, Mossi country presents a picture of such utter aridity that one wonders whether it is possible for such parched red soils to produce plant life. After the first drops of rain, however, the entire plain quickly becomes covered with grasses that sometimes reach heights of five or six feet. The most characteristic and valuable trees in the region are the baobab (*Adansonia digitata*), the locust-bean (*Parkia biglobosa*), the shea butter (*Butyrospermum parkii*), the tamarind (*Tamarindus indica*), and the kapok (*Bombax costatum*). The sole and unimportant representative of the palm family is the *Borassus aethiopium*. There are several kinds of acacias, including the *Kenyaya senegalensis*, and a wide variety of silk-cotton trees, the most important of which is *Eryodendron anfractuosum*.

The cultivated plants of the region include numerous varieties of cereals, roots, and legumes. Several varieties of sorghum (*Sorghum vulgare*) and millet (*Pennisetum typhoides*) constitute the staple crops of the Mossi, but maize (*Zea mays*) is extremely important because it is one of the first crops to be harvested after the difficult hungry period. Peanuts, onions, rice, beans, okra, fonio, and sweet potatoes form the bulk of the other cultivated crops. Manioc is grown only in small quantities because it requires moist soil for optimum development. The Mossi grow tobacco in fields around their

12:Skinner E-4,5 (1955-1957) 1962
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133 Red and White Voltas are merely a series of small stagnant pools during the dry season. In some low-lying areas around the main water courses, trapped water provides the moisture for dank riverine vegetation.

134 The soils of Mossi country are mainly ferruginous with red argils and pure silicates of aluminum predominating in the northern region. The soils in the south are thin, sandy, and formed from the decomposition of crystalline rocks and sandstones. During the dry season the Mossi landscape appears too sterile to produce plant life, but with the first drops of rain the entire country soon becomes covered with the grasses and shrubs which are characteristic of this Sudanese region. The uncultivated but valuable trees of this area include the Baobab *(Adansonia digitata)*, the locust bean *(Parkia biglobosa)*, the shea-butter *(Butyrospermum parkii)*, the tamarind *(Tamarindus indica)* and the kapok *(Bombax costatum)*. The plants which the Mossi cultivate include varieties of cereals, roots and legumes. Sorghums *(Sorghum vulgare)* and millets *(Pennisetum typhoides)* are their staples, with maize *(Zea mays)* filling the role of a secondary but rather useful crop because its growing cycle is shorter than that of other important crops and it breaks the "hungry period." Maize would be a more important crop to the Mossi if it could grow on soil less fertile than what is normally available around the Mossi compound—the area where it brings the greatest yield. Peanuts, onions, rice, beans, okra, peas and sweet potatoes are other food crops. Tobacco is grown for local consumption, but the crops which have the greatest export value are cotton and indigo, used for making cloth and dyeing it.

224 The wild fauna of the country does not provide a major part of the food needs of the Mossi people. The several species of deer and antelope, monkeys, rabbits and wild pig are hunted and used for food. But the elephants and lions which are also found in the country are sources of great distress to the people because the former decimate the growing crops and the latter attack and kill the grazing animals.

231 The Mossi rear two main types of cattle: a zebu-like one in the northern regions and a small dwarf variety in the south. These animals are kept primarily for their milk and for export, and are seldom killed for meat until they are very old. The animals which provide the Mossi with meat are goats, sheep, chickens and guinea fowls. Pig-raising is not widespread and seems to be declining in importance with the increasing observance of Islamic food taboos, even among people who are still pagan. Fish forms only a minor part of the Mossi diet and is obtained mainly from traders rather than from local activities. The Mossi also rear donkeys and horses for which they have